GARIBALDI LONDON 1864-1964

GIUSEPPE GARIBALDI IN LONDON
1864–1964

On the occasion
of the Centenary of his visit
and of the bestowal on him of the Freedom
of the City of London
the Mazzini and Garibaldi Club
and the British Italian Society
are jointly celebrating this event
for which Her Majesty's Government has
generously thrown open
Lancaster House and its garden.
A room there, dedicated to his memory,
contains a portrait of him
donated by the Italian Community
in London in 1882.

On June 30th 1964
there will be an Address at 6.15 p.m.
by Mr Noel Blakiston
of the Public Record Office
Editor of 'The Roman Question'
followed by a Reception at 6.45 p.m.

Mr Robert Mathew, M.P.
Parliamentary Under Secretary
for Foreign Affairs
will receive the guests.

G. Garibaldi

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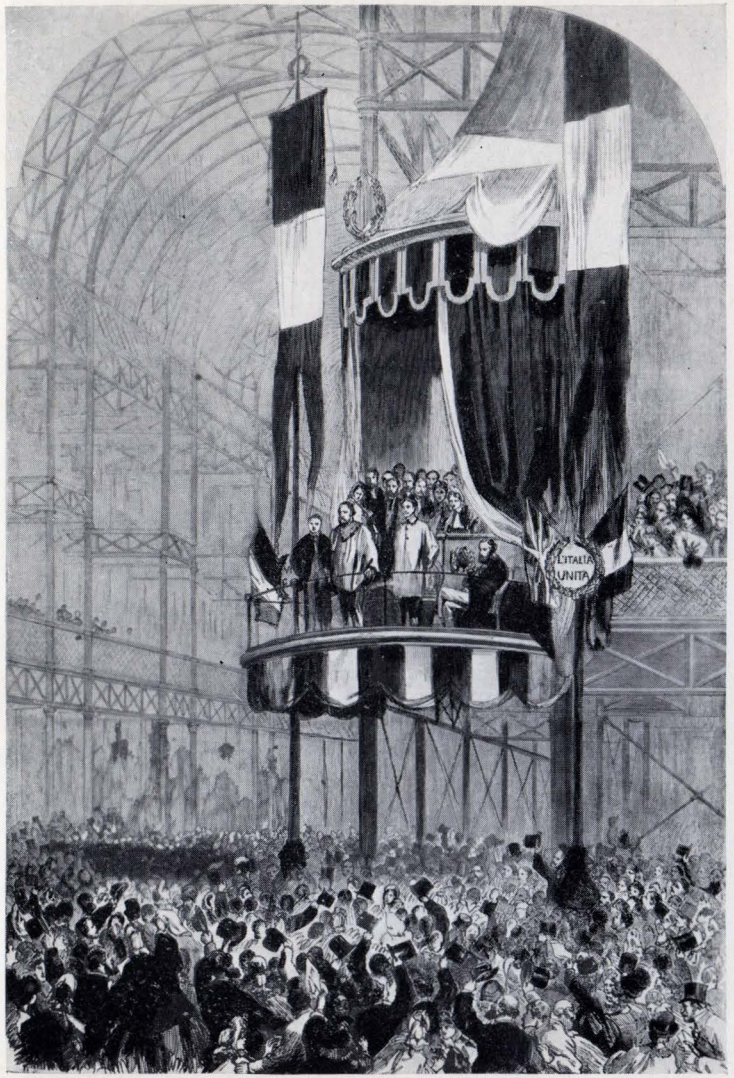
For nearly three weeks in April 1864, Garibaldi visited England as the guest of the Duke of Sutherland and Mr Seely, M.P., and received a tumultuous welcome from all classes of the English population as well as from the numerous Italian working people and exiled patriots for whom he was the heroic symbol of the new Italy. His name had been popular in England ever since, fifteen years earlier, he had fought so gallantly in defence of the short-lived Roman republic. Again he had been in the news in 1859 during the campaign that drove the Austrians out of Lombardy, and in 1860 his sensational landing in Sicily with a thousand volunteers, his defeat of the Bourbon troops and his triumphant march on Naples gave his name a romantic lustre that two later failures could hardly tarnish. For his work for the unity of Italy, with Rome as its capital, had not been completed in 1860. King Victor Emmanuel, whose army united with Garibaldi's volunteers to destroy

the Kingdom of Naples, did not, to Garibaldi's grief, then venture to march upon the capital of the Papal States, the integrity of which was guaranteed by a French garrison. For ten years, from 1860 to 1870, this prize was Garibaldi's avowed objective. On two occasions, in defiance of the authority of his King, he tried to snatch it. In 1862 he landed with a following of volunteers in Calabria, was shot in the foot on Aspromonte and called off the fight against his compatriots. In 1867 he led an expedition into the Papal States where his forces were defeated by the French at Mentana. The acquisition of Rome was at length made possible in 1870 for Victor Emmanuel, not through Garibaldi's agency, but simply by the withdrawal of the French garrison.

When Garibaldi visited England in 1864, he was still limping from his wound at Aspromonte. Physical weakness was, indeed, the avowed cause of the curtailment of the General's visit. The banquets, the receptions, the press of people, were exhausting him. Such alone, as stated in Parliament by Palmerston, Gladstone and Clarendon, was the cause of his departure. There is no doubt however that pressure not only from the Italian and other foreign governments but from many quarters in England, from the Queen downwards, must have made the government breathe more freely when the General's face was turned for home. But towards Garibaldi himself there was universal admiration for his heroic simplicity and singleness of purpose.



AT THE CRYSTAL PALACE the day had been named for 'the people's reception' of Garibaldi, and, according to general expectation, it was to have witnessed the assembling of a multitude vaster than any with which those great halls are familiar. The masses with whom he loves to associate his name were once more to welcome him among them. Since the day when the General made his triumphant entry he has been constantly under the public gaze, either in going to or from entertainments made for him by the titled and wealthy in paying visits to places of public interest, or in receiving deputations from public bodies. But an impression prevailed, and, indeed, admitted of no denial, that for one more occasion the people were bent upon having him all to themselves. Preparations were made accordingly. Excursion trains, bringing passengers from all parts of the country, ran upon the Great Western, the London and North-Western, the South-Eastern, the London, Chatham, and Dover, the London and Brighton, North London, and Great Eastern lines of railway, all converging and discharging their traffic upon the Crystal Palace. Within the building itself, to meet and mitigate the expected pressure strong barriers were erected in advantageous positions, and the propriety of bringing down an extra force of police was canvassed with the authorities. The weather proved everything that could be desired for such a journey and for displaying in full loveliness the charms of the grounds and surrounding scenery . . . The official returns give the total of visitors at between 24,000 and 25,000. *From 'The Times', April 19th 1864.*

The General left the [S.S.] 'Ripon', and proceeded in an open carriage through the town to the Mayor's residence at East-park. Everywhere he was received in the streets with the most hearty enthusiasm, and, notwithstanding that it was Sunday, flags were hoisted in all directions. Before leaving the 'Ripon', Garibaldi gave to Mr Negretti, a countryman of his, and an old friend, a small scrap of paper, on which he wrote with a pencil,

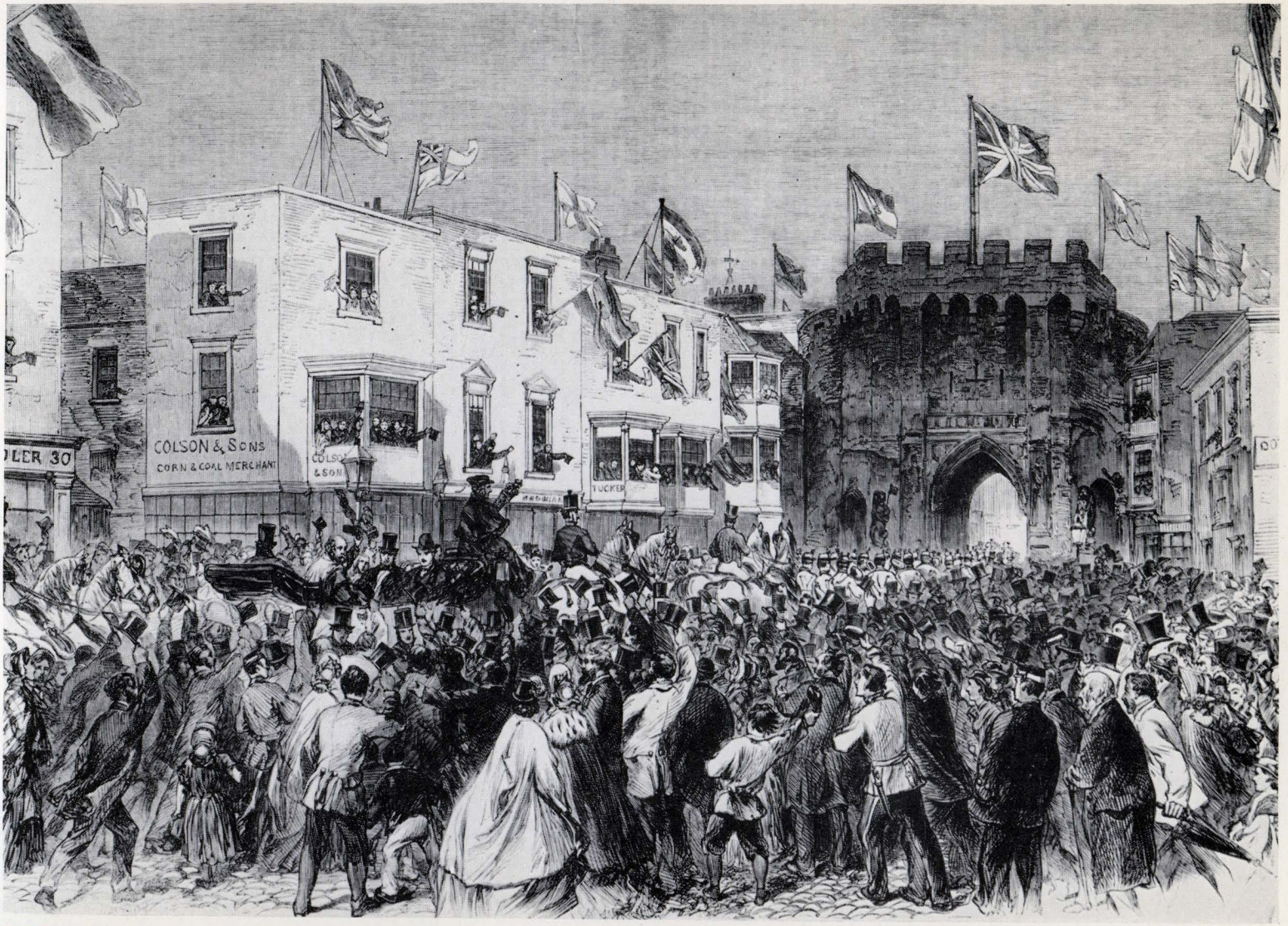
—'*Cari Amici,—Desidero non aver dimostrazioni politicali.* [*sic.*] G. GARIBALDI.

'P.S. *Sopra tutto, non eccitare dei tumulti.*'

('Dear Friends,—I do not desire any political demonstration; above all, not to excite any agitation.')

The voyage was, after leaving Gibraltar, a remarkably calm one. On the evening before arriving at SOUTHAMPTON General Garibaldi was entertained by all the passengers at a banquet, and in replying to the toast of his health he said that he owed his life to England, the country he regarded as the home of freedom and the hope of the slave in every part of the world.

To-morrow Garibaldi goes to the Town-hall to receive the address of the corporation, and in the afternoon starts for Brooke-house, with Mr Seely. On Friday next he will be entertained at a grand banquet here, and on Saturday arrive in London. While in the metropolis he will be the guest of the Duke of Sutherland, at Stafford House [now Lancaster House]. *From 'The Times' of Monday, April 4th 1864.*


COLSON & SONS
CORN & COAL MERCHANT

'While he was staying under Mr Seely's roof in THE ISLE OF WIGHT, he went to visit his brother poet, always an enthusiast for Italian freedom. They smoked and repeated Italian poetry to each other with great fervour. "What a noble human being!" wrote Tennyson when he had parted from his guest. "I expected to see a hero and I was not disappointed. One cannot exactly say of him what Chaucer says of the ideal Knight, *As meke he was of port as is a maid.* He is more majestic than meek, and his manners have a certain divine simplicity in them, such as I have never witnessed in a native of these islands, among men at least, and they are gentler than those of most young maidens whom I know." In worldly matters, Tennyson noted that he had the "divine stupidity of a hero".

'It was on this visit that Garibaldi planted the tree which Tennyson long afterwards celebrated as

. . . the waving pine which here
The warrior of Caprera set,
A name that earth will not forget
Till earth has rolled her latest year.'

From 'Garibaldi and the Making of Italy' by G. M. Trevelyan.

MAZZINI & GARIBALDI CLUB

The Society for the Progress of Italian Operatives in London (better known as the Mazzini & Garibaldi Club), the oldest Italian foundation in the United Kingdom, was founded as a Friendly Society in 1864, following Garibaldi's memorable visit to London in that year. Garibaldi and Mazzini were its founders, linking the powers of sword and pen to promote the well-being of Italian workers in this foreign land. Mazzini himself framed its first Constitution, and his fame and example still inspire the Society in its works of patriotism and humanity. Suspended during the war, the Society opened its doors again at 51 Red Lion Street, London, W.C.1, in December 1951.
Chairman: Commendatore S. Pini.

THE BRITISH-ITALIAN SOCIETY

The British-Italian Society was founded in 1941 as 'The Friends of Free Italy', to encourage the defenders of Italian freedom. Re-established under its present name in 1945, the Society works for the understanding in Great Britain of Italian life, art, history, language, and institutions, and for the promotion of friendship between Great Britain and Italy and their people.
Further information may be had from The Secretary, British-Italian Society, 2 Beauchamp Place, London, S.W.3.
President: The Rt. Hon. the Earl of Harewood.
Chairman: Sir Ashley Clarke, G.C.M.G., G.C.V.O.

Opposite: Garibaldi's letter to the Italian Community in London, in possession of the Mazzini & Garibaldi Club.

Agli Operai italiani
in Londra
e alla loro Banda Musicale

Fratelli Operai

Vi lascio, partendo, un saluto delle cose e una parola di riconoscenza per l'affetto, che testimoniaste a me ed alla Italia. Conservatevi devoti al lavoro ed alla patria. Abbiate fede nella causa immortale della libertà e della umanità. La storia degli operai italiani è storia di virtù e di glorie nazionali. Non dimenticate i padri nostri, e stabilite esempio al componimento de' nuovi doveri. Voi interpretate nella vostra bandiera ciò che l'Italia aspetta da noi. Addio, fratelli. Lavoriamo insieme all'impresa rigeneratrice.

Londra 7 Aprile 1864

Vostro
G. Garibaldi

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